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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/762,580	01/23/2004	Taku Motohashi	024629-00013	3029
4372	7590	02/15/2007	EXAMINER	
ARENT FOX PLLC 1050 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 400 WASHINGTON, DC 20036			TYLER, NATHAN K	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2609	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/15/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/762,580	MOTOHASHI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Nathan K. Tyler	2609

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05/05/2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 23 January 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12152005, 05052004.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the abstract may not include other parts of the application. Additionally, the abstract should only be one paragraph in length. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

The substitute specification filed 5 May 2004 has not been entered because it does not conform to 37 CFR 1.125(b) and (c) because: A marked copy showing what changes have been made was not provided along with the clean copy.

Claim Objections - 37 CFR 1.75(a)

1. The following is a quotation of 37 CFR 1.75(a):

The specification must conclude with a claim particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention or discovery.

2. Claims 9, 12, and 16 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(a), as failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which application regards as his invention or discovery.

Regarding **claim 9**, the term “the managing terminal” at line 8 lacks an antecedent basis. However, it appears from the context of the claim when read in light of the specification that “the managing terminal” is the first mention of this limitation, and should instead read “a managing terminal”; and this will be assumed for examination purposes.

Regarding **claim 12**, the term “said inquiry-source terminal” at line 4 lacks an antecedent basis. However, it appears from the context of the claim when read in light of the specification that claim 9 should provide antecedent basis for the limitation “said inquiry-source terminal”. The following will be assumed for examination purposes from here forward:

From

“9. (Original) An inquiry-sorting system that sorts inquiries received as FAX data among answering departments that will answer the inquiries and comprising: an information-communication-form-creation means of receiving said FAX data and creating an information-communication form for managing said inquiry;”,

To:

– – “9. (Original) An inquiry-sorting system that sorts inquiries received as FAX data among answering departments that will answer the inquiries and comprising: an information-communication-form-creation means of receiving said FAX data from an inquiry-source terminal and creating an information-communication form for managing said inquiry;” – –

The above objection also applies similarly to **claim 16**, and a similar assumption will be made regarding claim 13 in order to provide antecedent basis for “said inquiry-source terminal” at line 2 of claim 16.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1, 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Korn (US 20050275893 A1).

Regarding **claims 1 and 5**, Korn discloses a FAX-receiving means of receiving said FAX data (“The IC may distribute the ICFs to the IPs by either mail or fax.” at paragraph 39) and converting said received FAX data to FAx-image data that is in image format that can be viewed by a browser (“When an IP who has a computer on which the FMS (IP version) resides receives an ICF... he launches the FMS and scans the ICF” at paragraph 39, line 2); an information-communication-form-creation means of creating an information-communication form that contains said FAx-image data converted by said FAX-receiving means and is used for managing said inquiries (“The FMS then combines the formatting information encoded in the FFB with the text printed on the remainder of the form to produce an electronic version of the form” at paragraph 39, line 6); an information-communication-form-memory means of storing said information-communication-form created by said information-communication-form-creation means (Fig. 5, numeral 18: “Memory”); and an input-screen-providing means of providing a browser screen comprising an input area for performing input to said information-communication-form that is stored in said information-communication-form-memory means, and a display area for displaying said FAx-image data (“combines the formatting information encoded in the FFB with the text printed on the remainder of the form to produce an electronic

version of the form on the screen, which the IP then fills out on the computer.” At paragraph 39, line 7).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2, 4/2, 6, and 8/6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Korn and Amano et al. (US 6901307 B2).

Regarding **claims 2 and 6**, Korn discloses that the information-communication form comprises form information for identifying said information-communication form (Fig. 7b, numeral 54: “Field Format Block”) and identifying the inquiry source (the form is returned to the inquiry source, therefore the form must identify the source of the inquiry or return would be impossible); comments and answer comments (“The second main field type is the input field.” at paragraph 45). Korn does not disclose that the information-communication form comprises part information for identifying the repair part that is the object of the inquiry.

Amano discloses that the information-communication form comprises part information (Fig. 3, numerals a1-a4: “Part No.”, “Part Type”, etc...).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the part information as disclosed by Amano in the information-communication form taught by Korn, in order to obtain a price quote for a specific part via fax (“a die

modification estimate system that quickly outputs a reliable modification cost according to the contents of die modification specified by the person who wants an estimate cost." at Amano column 1, line 32).

Regarding **claims 4/2 and 8/6**, Korn discloses that the comments and answer comments of the information-communication form that is created by the information-communication-form-creation means are blank fields ("the printed "blank" form) is then received by the information provider for data input." at paragraph 51, line 17). Korn does not disclose that the part information fields are blank fields.

Amano discloses that the part information fields are blank fields (Fig. 3: part information fields (numerals a1 – a4) are blank).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the part information as disclosed by Amano in the information-communication form taught by Korn, for the reasons stated above.

7. Claims 3, 4/3, 7, and 8/7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Korn and Amano et al. as applied to claims 2, 4, 6, and 8 above, and further in view of Baran (US 5247591 A).

Regarding **claims 3 and 7**, the combination of Korn and Amano does not disclose that the FAX-receiving means outputs the sender's number and/or FAX header to said information-communication-form-creation means, and said information-communication-form-creation means performs input to the items of said form information based on the sender's number and/or FAX header.

Baran discloses that the FAX-receiving means outputs the sender's number and/or FAX header to said information-communication-form-creation means, and said information-communication-form-creation means performs input to the items of said form information based on the sender's number and/or FAX header ("An input cover sheet 48 is received by fax server 42 and the handwritten information in fields 16 is interpreted... Using those abbreviations together with that previously stored information, fax server 42 maps the abbreviations into the fax telephone numbers and names of the intended recipients (block 54), [and] generates the necessary expanded cover sheets." at column 6, line 3; Fig. 1, numeral 16: "From" field).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the handwritten character interpretation system taught by Baran in the fax-receiving means taught by the combination of Korn and Amano, so that information entered by hand into the received fax could be automatically entered into the information-communication form in a more clearly readable format ("the first cover sheet is optionally automatically replaced by a second and final neatly printed cover sheet" at column 2, line 15).

Regarding **claims 4/3 and 8/7**, the combination of Korn and Amano discloses that the part information (Amano: Fig. 3: part information fields (numerals a1 – a4) are blank); comments and answer comments of the information-communication form that is created by the information-communication-form-creation means are blank fields (Korn: "the printed "blank" form) is then received by the information provider for data input." at paragraph 51, line 17).

Claims 9, 12, 13, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Korn and Cogger et al (US 6032184 A).

Regarding **claims 9 and 13**, Korn discloses an information-communication-form-creation means of receiving FAX data from an inquiry-source terminal and creating an information-communication form for managing an inquiry (see above grounds for rejection); an information-communication-form-memory means of storing the information-communication form that was created by the information-communication-from-creation means (see above grounds for rejection); and a form-screen-providing means of providing a managing terminal with a browser screen that comprises an inquiry-contents-input area for inputting inquiry contents into the information-communication form that is stored in the information-communication-form-memory means (see above grounds for rejection).

Korn does not disclose designating an answering terminal according to the input inquiry contents; and an inquiry-answer-screen-providing means of providing the answering terminal that was designated by the input of the inquiry contents with a browser screen that comprises an answer-comment-input area for inputting answer comments into said information-communication form that is stored in said information-communication-form-memory unit.

Cogger discloses designating an answering terminal according to the input inquiry contents ("if the owning organization determines that further action is required by a second service organization, then the ticket is transferred to the second service organization." At column 16, line 23); and an inquiry-answer-screen-providing means of providing the answering terminal that was designated by the input of the inquiry contents with a browser screen that comprises an answer-comment-input area for inputting answer comments into said information-communication form that is stored in said information-communication-form-memory unit ("the second service organization follows steps 908 and 910 as described above." At column 16, line

42; "Additionally, any applicable comments are electronically stored in the remarks list associated with the trouble ticket. These actions are represented by step 910." At column 16, line 16; Cogger's second terminal performs the same actions as the first terminal and therefore has the same capabilities.).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the inquiry management system taught by Korn with a second answering terminal, and means to designate that second terminal as taught by Cogger, so that the user of the second terminal could answer any inquiries that the user of the first terminal is unable to answer ("if the owning organization determines that further action is required by a second service organization, then the ticket is transferred to the second service organization." Cogger column 16, line 23).

Regarding **claims 12** as dependent from claim 9, and **claim 16** as dependent from claim 13, while Korn discloses the limitations of claim 9, from which claim 12 depends, and claim 13, from which claim 16 depends, Korn does not disclose that the answer-screen-providing means sends an answer-complete notification to said inquiry-source terminal when an instruction to answer said inquiry is received from said answering terminal.

Cogger discloses that the answer-screen-providing means sends an answer-complete notification to the inquiry-source terminal when an instruction to answer the inquiry is received from the answering terminal ("if the network problem has been resolved, the trouble ticket is referred back to the customer." At column 16, line 21).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to send an answer-complete notification as taught by Cogger to the inquiry-source

terminal taught by Korn, so that the customer would be notified when the problem described by the inquiry had been solved (“For example, if the network problem has been resolved, the trouble ticket is referred back to the customer.” At column 16, line 21).

Claims 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Korn and Cogger as applied to claims 9 and 13 above, and further in view of Atsumi (US 20050036167 A1).

Regarding **claims 10 and 14**, while the combination of Korn and Cogger discloses the limitations of claim 9, from which claim 10 depends, and claim 13, from which claim 14 depends, it does not disclose that the information-communication-form-creation means sends an information-communication-form-creation notification to said managing terminal to notify that said information-communication-form has been created.

Atsumi discloses sending a notification to a managing terminal to notify that a information-communication-form has been created (“a notifying unit operable to send receipt information to outside of the fax data transmission device, the receipt information including the identifier and a notification that the fax data identified by the identifier has been received.” At paragraph 8, line 5).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the inquiry management system taught by the combination of Korn and Cogger with the notification section taught by Atsumi, so that the user of the managing terminal would immediately be aware that a information-communication-form was created (“This enables the user to know the receipt of the fax data right away.” Atsumi paragraph 9, line 2).

Regarding **claims 11 and 15**, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to send an inquiry-request notification as taught by Atsumi to the answering terminal when an inquiry instruction is received from the managing terminal as taught by the combination of Korn and Cogger so that the user of the answering terminal would immediately be aware that an inquiry instruction had been received (see above grounds for rejection).

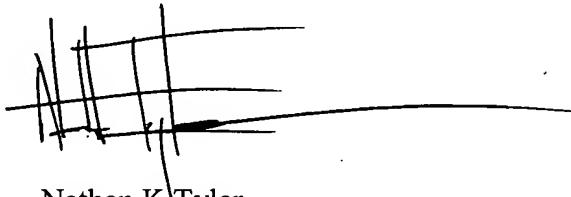
Regarding **claim 12** as dependent from claim 10, and **claim 16** as dependent from claim 14, Cogger discloses that the answer-screen-providing means sends an answer-complete notification to the inquiry-source terminal when an instruction to answer the inquiry is received from the answering terminal (“if the network problem has been resolved, the trouble ticket is referred back to the customer.” At column 16, line 21).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nathan K. Tyler whose telephone number is 571-270-1584. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30am - 5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Brian Werner can be reached on 571-272-7401. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Nathan K. Tyler
Examiner
Art Unit 2609



**BRIAN WERNER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**